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ABSTRACT

In order to determine the barriers to enrollment in Wisconsin vocational and technical institutes, 440 questionnaires were sent to potential students in the 1975-76 school year; 198 questionnaires were returned, over half from students who had applied but did not attend, for a response rate of 45%. Results of the survey indicated that, overall, job security, need for money, career indecisiveness, and program difficulties were the main barriers to enrollment at vocational-technical schools. Additionally, survey data indicated: (1) respondents had generally positive attitudes toward vocational-technical schools; (2) distance was a barrier to enrollment; (3) females experienced barriers to enrollment as a consequence of the limited number of programs which they perceived as available to them; and (4) financial aid, scheduling, information, and transportation were identified as barriers to enrollment. Recommendations made to reduce enrollment barriers included implementing more flexible instructional schedules, increasing adult counseling, offering more evening courses, encouraging females to participate in non-traditional occupations, increasing efforts in the area of minority recruitment, better dissemination of financial aid information, broadening the base of program offerings, better articulation with high schools, and personalization of the enrollment process. Survey data are included in the report. (JDS)

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Supplement to

Project 14-009-151-226

BARRIERS TO ENROLLMENT IN POST-SECONDARY VTAE PROGRAMS IN WISCONSIN

Report Pertaining To

Southwest Wisconsin Vocational-Technical Institute
Fennimore, Wisconsin

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to discover the barriers which prevent recent high school graduates and adults from furthering their education by enrolling in and actually attending a post-secondary program at a Wisconsin VTAE school.

This supplement contains information pertinent to the Southwest Wisconsin Vocational-Technical Institute, one of the four districts participating in the Barriers to Enrollment project. Surverys were sent to persons who had applied but did not attend in the 1975-76 school year, and to recent high school graduates who had indicated on the 1975 Wisconsin Senior Survey that they were interested in attending a vocational-technical school. Results specifically pertaining to Southwest Wisconsin Vocational-Technical Institute follow in this report.

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SURVEY RESULTS FOR SOUTHWEST WISCONSIN VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL INSTITUTE

In this study on Barriers to Enrollment 440 surveys were sent out to potential students in the 1975-76 school year. One hundred and ninety-eight returned them for a response rate of 45%. The results of each item in the survey are given. Those names obtained from the files of those who applied but did not attend are designated "application" and those names obtained from the 1975 Wisconsin Senior Survey are designated "no application". The Student Profile Study for 1975-76 was used for comparison with some survey items.

SURVEY TOTALS

198 returned - 45% response

CATEGORIES OF RESPONDENTS

Application	114	57.6%	male - 57.0%	female - 43.0%
No Application	84	42.4%	male - 37.0%	female - 63.0%

These figures are interesting in that attending student enrollment is 63% male and 37% female. In comparison with their percentage in the study body, females apply but do not attend more often than males. The rate of "no application" respondents is the reverse of the study population. Two-thirds of "no application" respondents were females possibly indicating a lack of program choice or lack of encouragement or desire to enter the preponderantly male - oriented programs at Southwest Tech.

COUNTY

Among counties the highest number of respondents were living in Grant County where the vocational-technical school is located.

Non-attending respondents from the county of the school's location or nearby county had lower percentages when compared to attending student rates for these areas. Further distances or access to other post-secondary schools raised the non-attendance rate in comparison with the percentages of those in school from Crawford, Lafayette and Richland counties.

In comparing percentages of those in school with those not attending Crawford (17.3%), Lafayette (16.2%), and Richland (11.4%) had higher percentages not coming. Grant and Iowa had less non-attending when compared to percentages actually attending.

(Total answering - 185)

Southwest District	% Respondents		% Enrolled at Southwest Tech
Grant	64	34.6%	43.6%
Crawford	32	17.3	9.3
Lafayette	30	16.2	11.7
Iowa	28	15.1	18.6
Richland	21	11.4	7.5
Outside District			
Green	3	1.6	
Clark	1	.5	
Rock	1	.5	
Wood	1	.5	
Other	3	1.6	
State of Iowa	1	.5	

1. Age Group (198)

	TOTAL		MALE		FEMALE	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
16-18	86	43.4%	39	40.6%	47	46.1%
19-24	98	49.5	49	51.0	49	48.0
25-30	7	3.5	5	5.2	2	2.0
Over 30	7	3.5	3	3.1	4	3.9

Ninety-three percent of respondents were under 25. Only 7% were over 25. Females tended to be somewhat younger than male respondents.

When compared to attending student age groups one-half of non-attending students are 19-24, but of those attending, they are just about 25% indicating that this age group may have more difficulty deciding to go to school changing goals and personal situations where families are involved.

2. Sex (198)

Male 96 48.5% Female 102 51.5%

Response was nearly equal. Student body is 37% female, 63% male.

3. Veteran Status

Of 197 answering, 13 or 6.6% were veterans that did not attend. Southwest has 17% veterans within the student body. Veterans benefits may encourage veterans to attend since non-attendance rate is low. Three-quarters of veterans are married.

4. Marital Status (197)

	TOTAL		MALE		FEMALE	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
Married	28	14.2%	15	15.6%	13	12.9%
Single	163	82.7	78	81.3	85	84.2
Head of Household	6	3.0	3	3.1	3	3.0

Non-attending married respondents (14.2%) have a slightly greater rate then the people attending, 13%. Somewhat more males (15.6%) were married than females (12.9%) among respondents. Only six respondents marked Head of Household and they share the same problems as married people. About 83% of all respondents were single. Nearly all married respondents were in the adult group that had applied.

Among single respondents, far more females were in "no application" catagory (about ½ of all female respondents and ¼ of male respondents). This is probably because of the greater number of females who go to non-local VT schools.

5. How do you describe yourself? (198)

Native American	6	3.0%
Spanish American	1	.5
Oriental	1	.5
Caucasian	190	96.0

4% of respondents were in minority groups.

6. Last High School Attended (198)

SCHOOL DISTRICT	STUDENTS NOT ENROLLING AT SOUTHWEST TECH		1975-76 STUDENTS
	NUMBER	PERCENT	% ENROLLED AT S-W TECH
*Boscobel	11	5.6%	5.1%
*Richland Center	13	6.6	6.5
Fennimore	9	4.6	6.5
Platteville	10	5.1	10.3
Lancaster	11	5.6	7.3
*Prairie du Chien	13	6.6	4.5
*Dodgeville	10	5.1	4.8
*Belmont	4	2.0	1.6
Darlington	11	5.6	5.8
Hazel Green	6	3.0	3.0
Iowa-Grant	11	5.6	6.8
Riverdale	4	2.0	2.8
Cassville	1	.5	1.9
*Wauzeka	4	2.0	1.2
*Benton	1	.5	.4
Cuba City	5	2.5	4.5
Bloomington	1	.5	1.2
Highland	3	1.5	3.0
Mineral Point	5	2.5	5.5
Pecatonica	4	2.0	2.2
*Argyle	4	2.0	1.0
*Blackhawk	4	2.0	1.8
*Potosi	1	.5	3.0
Patch Grove	1	.5	1.6
*Barnveld	2	1.0	0.0
*Shullsburg	5	2.5	1.8
*North Crawford	11	5.6	3.0
*Seneca	4	2.0	.9
*Ithaca	3	1.5	.3
*Weston	3	1.5	.4
*Kickapoo	3	1.5	1.3
Pacelli	1	.5	
Ozaukee	1	.5	
Other	18	9.1	

This item is similar to the data on county of residence. We compared in the above table students who decided not to attend with students in the right hand column who did attend Southwest Tech. The students who did not attend are usually from places further away (asterisk by them, i.e. Crawford, Lafayette and Richland counties) with some exceptions (like Boscobel). There is also the relationship of certain schools in attitude or type of socio-economic situation of a two with its response to a VT school. Other colleges or VT schools like the UW Center in Richland Center, or the Madison, LaCrosse and Janesville VT schools provide other choices for students.

7. Highest Grade Completed (197)

GRADE	NUMBER	PERCENT
8	0	0.0%
9	2	1.0
10	2	1.0
11	6	3.1
12	171	86.8
13	12	6.1
14	1	.5
15	3	1.5
16	0	0.0

Almost 87% of the respondents had finished high school plus 8.1% more had tried college making, 94.9%. Only 5.1% had not finished high school. This is very close to the 5.3% attending of students who had not finished high school. Twelve point four percent of attending students had some college.

8. Year of Graduation or Year Left High School (198)

This item was used to separate those who left high school in 1975 from adults who left school earlier.

Post-High School	151	76.3%	male	64	42%	female	87	58%
Adults	47	23.7%	male	32	68%	female	15	32%

Three-quarters of the respondents had just left school. Almost three-fifths of these were females, many of whom chose other VT schools and were in the "no application" group. Males were over two-thirds of the adult group reflecting their somewhat older age since one-half of these males were the veterans who responded to the survey.

9. Type of Diploma (195)

Diploma	183	93.9%	As shown under "highest grade completed",
GED	1	.5	94% had diplomas. Only one respondent had
Neither	11	5.6	received a GED. Almost 6% had neither.

Post-high school and adult groups were separated and then broken down by sex to illustrate differences between them within the "highest grade completed" and "type of diploma" items.

In the adult group, 81% of males and 85% of females had diplomas. Nineteen percent of the males had no diploma compared to 8% of females. By grade somewhat more females had finished grade 12. Almost 22% of the adult respondents had tried college (29% of females and 19% of males).

In the post-high school group (those who left in 1975) 96.8% of males and 97.7% of females had diplomas for an average of 97.3%. None had GED but 2.3% of females and 3.2% of males had neither averaging 2.7%. Broken down by grade 7% of females but no males had gone on to college of respondents. Figures are not a true picture because many of post-high school respondents were from the 1975 Senior Survey and were to graduate.

Highest Grade Completed

GRADE	Post-High School (151) MALE		FEMALE		TOTAL		Adult (47) MALE		FEMALE		TOTAL	
9	----		----		----		1	3.1%	1	7.1%	2	4.4%
10	1	1.7	1	1.2	2	1.3	-		-		-	
11	1	1.7	-		1	.7	5	15.6	-		5	10.9
12	62	96.9	80	92.0	142	94.0	20	62.5	9	64.3	29	63.0
13	-		6	7.0	6	4.0	4	12.5	2	14.3	6	13.0
14	-		-		-		1	3.1	-		1	2.2
15	-		-		-		1	3.1	2	14.3	3	6.5
	64		87		151		32		14		46	

Type of Diploma

	Post-High School (151) MALE		FEMALE		TOTAL		Adult (47) MALE		FEMALE		TOTAL	
Diploma	61	96.8	85	97.7	146	97.3	26	81.3	11	84.6	37	82.2
GED	--		--		---		--		1	7.7	1	2.2
Neither	2	3.2	2	2.3	4	2.7	6	18.8	1	7.7	7	15.6
	63		87		150		32		13		45	

Highest grade completed was also compared to racial group, but is not valid since only 8 respondents marked other than Caucasian. One of these had less than a high school diploma. None of the six Native Americans had attended beyond high schoool.

Which VT school are you attending under Item 10

50 out of 198 respondents were attending VT schools other than Southwest Tech.

District 1 Eau Claire	2	4.0%	Most chose VT schools
Western Wis. LaCrosse	14	28.0	adjacent to Southwest
VTAE 4 Madison Area	21	42.0	District (WWTI or MATC)
Blackhawk-Janesville	2	4.0	
Gateway-Kenosha	2	4.0	
Milwaukee Area	2	4.0	
Moraine Park Fond du Lac	1	2.0	
Area 1 - Dubuque	1	2.0	
Rice Lake	1	1.0	
Not Listed	4	8.0	

11. Which VT school were you planning to attend within the past year? (198)

Southwest Wisconsin	119	60.1%	Most either planned on attending Southwest Tech or a school close to local district with a program they wanted.
District 1 - Eau Claire	2	1.0	
Western Wis. - LaCrosse	20	10.1	
VTAE 4 - Madison Area	28	14.1	
Blackhawk - Janesville	2	1.0	
Milwaukee Area	2	1.0	
Fox Valley - Appleton	3	1.5	
Mid-State - Wis. Rapids	1	.5	
Nicolet - Rhinelander	1	.5	
Area 1 - Dubuque	1	.5	
Rice Lake	1	.5	
Superior	1	.5	
Undecided	6	3.0	

12. Did you pay any fees? (193)

Yes	103	53.4%	No	90	46.6%

10. What are you doing now? (198)

Employed full-time	67	33.8%	Although there were multiple responses percentages were based on 198 respondents.
Employed part-time	21	10.6	
Unemployed	24	12.1	
Traveling	2	1.0	
Volunteer	--	----	
Job Seeking	17	8.6	
Military Service	5	2.5	
Homemaking	8	4.0	
Apprenticeship	--	----	
Attending a college	15	7.6	
Attending VT school	51	25.8	
Other	10	5.1	

In Item 10, no respondents from the Southwest Wisconsin area checked doing volunteer work or apprenticeship work. Traveling, military service, and homemaking received low responses. Unemployed (12%) and job seeking (8.6%) overlapped. While 7.6% of respondents were attending college, over 25% were going to non-local vocational schools. One-third of respondents were employed full-time and almost 11% were employed part-time.

Within the Southwest Wisconsin District, 80% of the 51 respondents attending other VT schools were females. Their number represents nearly one-fifth of all respondents and they were mainly "no application" respondents who had indicated interest in vocational school on the 1975 Wisconsin Senior Survey.

Many of those attending other schools did not finish the questionnaire, but of the 26 who did, 16 or 60% marked in Item 15 "programs offered at my local VT school were not what I wanted". Fifteen percent of those attending other VT schools would have preferred going to Southwest Tech. Eighty percent of all other respondents preferred going to Southwest Tech.

By age, 50% of those attending other VT schools were 16-18 and 48% were 19-24. Most were single. A distance factor was somewhat discernable among respondents attending non-local VT schools. Those who lived on the fringe areas of Southwest Tech near Blackhawk, WWTI, or MATC, tended to go to those districts. The greater number of females at other schools did not seem to relate to the distance factor since many were from areas close to the local VT school. The sexes were quite evenly divided in fringe areas of Southwest Tech.

Of those who were unemployed or job seeking, 20% did not have high school diplomas. This was 50% of all those respondents who did not have diplomas. One-third were among the adults. Over one-half of the unemployed or job seeking were in the 19-24 year old age group and 80% of these two groups' respondents were single.

Among the 21 part-time workers, 10 overlapped with attending another VT school, college or job seeking. Reasons for not attending did not concentrate in anyone area.

Sixty-seven or 33.8% of respondents were employed full-time. Jobs were a priority with most of them as their reasons for not coming indicate. Forty-one marked "found a permanent job; 20 "needed to earn money to support self of family"; 18 could not decide to attend"; and 20 " postponed plans". Eighteen of the 67 were married which was over 2/3's of those responding who were married. Forty-eight were among those who had applied.

More males had found employment than females according to percentages. By age group the percent employed went up as age increased. (16-18, 28% employed; 19-24, 35% employed; 25-30, 43% employed; over 30, 57% employed)

Only 15 respondents were attending college. Nine of these respondents had marked "accepted at another school". Homemakers (4% of respondents) were concerned with money needed to support their families. Two had found jobs and some had just postponed plans. They did not mention "lack of financial aid". Child care may have been a problem because some had mentioned it in comments along with schedule conflicts.

BREAKDOWN OF ITEM 10 BY POST-HIGH SCHOOL & ADULT, RACIAL GROUP, MALE & FEMALE, MARITAL STATUS, VETERAN STATUS, SPECIFIC REASONS IN ITEM 15, & ATTENDANCE IN FUTURE
(by percent of column)

What are you doing now?	Item 10	Native American	Caucasian	Post-High School Application	Post-High School No Application	Post-High School	Adults	Male	Male - Married	Male - Single	Female	Female - Married	Female - Single	Married	Single	Veteran	Needed Money to Support Self or Family	Could Not Find a Part-Time Job That Fit Around School Time	Programs Offered at Local VT Were Not What I Wanted	Space Not Available in Program I Wanted	Did Not Wish to Move Out of Area For a Job	Credits Were Not Transferable	I Lacked Financial Aids	Postponed Plans to a Future Year	Yes	Uncertain	No
Employed full-time	34	50	34	39	21.4	29	49	45	73	40	23.5	46	20	61	29	54	58	44	15.6	14	40	0	35	50	40	47	22
Employed part-time	10	17	10	12	13	12.6	4	11.5	7	13	10	0	12	3.6	12	15.4	12.5	33	15.6	0	20	0	10	4.5	11	10.5	7.4
Unemployed	12	0	12.6	7.5	11	9	31	13.5	20	13	11	8	12	14	12	23	15	0	3	29	0	0	35	23	16	16	4
Traveling	1	0	1	1.5	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.3	2.4	0	0
Job seeking	8.6	17	8.4	13.4	3.6	8	10.6	9.4	7	10	8	0	8	3.6	9	0	10	11	6	29	20	0	24	16	11	9	7.4
Military service	2.5	17	2	4.5	1	2.6	2	5	0	6.4	0	0	0	0	3	8	2.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	7	0
Homemaking	4	17	4	4.5	1	2.6	8.5	0	0	0	8	54	0	25	0	0	2.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2.4	7	7.4
Attending college	7.6	0	8	2	3.6	7	8.5	9.4	7	10	6	0	7	3.6	8.6	8	2.5	11	9.4	14	0	100	3.4	4.5	4	5	33
Attending VT	26	17	26	7.5	52	33	4	12.5	0	14	38	15.4	44	7	29	0	0	0	53	0	20	0	0	2	18	5	18.5
Other	5	0	5	6	5	5	4	2	0	1	8	8	8	3.6	5	0	2.5	11	9.4	14	0	0	10	2	4	5	15

CHART ONE

CHART I - There were no respondents from the Southwest District that marked "volunteer" or "apprenticeship" in Item 10. Under Item 5, How do you describe yourself?, there were too few non-Caucasians to make valid comparisons, but percentages for Native Americans and Caucasians are given. Oriental and Spanish American were left out.

The post-high school respondents were compared to the adults. Far more adults, 49% to 29% (post-high school) had jobs, but more post-high school respondents had part-time jobs which matches the fact that these people are more likely to combine school and work. Adult respondents also were unemployed more 21% to 9% for post-high school. Again, non-working post-high school respondents are more likely to go to school and not consider themselves unemployed. More adult respondents were homemakers (8.5%) to post-high school respondents (2.6%). This is logical since far more adult respondents are married. Those attending college were almost evenly divided in group percentages (post-high school 7%, adult 8.5%). Far more post-high school respondents were attending other VT schools (33% to only 4% of adults). Adults are less able or willing to move if they are married or like the area. High school graduates go where the programs are that they want and are not encumbered by other obligations.

Far more post-high school "application" respondents, 39%, who applied, now held jobs than those who were "no application" respondents, 21.4%. Jobs were a greater priority for them. Fifty-two percent of "no application" respondents were attending other vocational schools which was probably the intention of most of this group. More "application" respondents were job seeking, 13.4%, than "no application" respondents, 3.6%.

Under marital status, head of household and single-head of household, were omitted because of few respondents (only 6).

Far more married respondents (61%) held jobs compared to post-high school respondents (29%), but more post-high school respondents (12%) had part-time jobs of which many were also going to school. Only single respondents had joined the military. One-fourth of the married respondents were homemakers.

Single respondents (8.6%) were more able to attend college than married respondents (3.6%) who often have other obligations. Twenty-nine percent of the single respondents were attending non-local VT schools compared to 7% of the married group.

Forty-nine percent of male respondents held full-time jobs while 23.5% of females held full-time jobs. Males also had a higher unemployed rate of 21% to 11% for women. This discrepancy is partly explained by the married women who might want jobs but mark homemaker and the many single women, (44%) who were attending other VT schools compared to 14% of single men. Thirty-eight percent of all females compared to 12.5% of all males were going to non-local VT schools is explained by the lack of programs offered at Southwest Wisconsin that were desired by mainly young women.

More male respondents (9.4%) were attending college than females (6%). The Southwest District on the whole has fewer women in the labor market or attending vocational schools when compared to national figures. Nationally women are 39% of the labor force and about one-half of the vocational students compared to 33% and 37% in southwest Wisconsin.

Comparison of Item 10 with Item 15. Those who marked "need money to support self or family" or "could not find a part-time job to fit around school time" were mainly employed full-time or part-time now. Jobs were top priority for them. College people were the only ones concerned with credit transfer at VT schools and they chose college.

Nearly all those who "lacked financial aids" found jobs or were in the job market. The same is generally true of "postponed plans to the future" with the inclusion of homemakers who were 4.5% of those who marked it.

Those dealing with programs were: "programs offered at my local VT school were not what I wanted" (those who marked this were going to other schools (53%) or had gotten jobs); "space not available in program I want" (30% were unemployed and 30% were job seeking); "did not want to leave area after completing program" (most of these respondents got jobs).

Most of those who said "no" they would not attend a VT school in the future were in college (33%) or in VT school already (18.5%). Those who said yes or were uncertain most were employed full-time, unemployed or job seeking.

13. Reasons for selecting particular VT school (198)

	TOTAL		PHS APPL.		PHS NO APPL.		ADULT		PHS	
the school was small	40	20.2%	18	27.0%	11	13.0%	11	23.0%	29	19.0
the school was large	9	4.5	3	4.5	6	7.0	--		9	6.0
the school was close to home	103	52.0	43	64.0	32	38.0	28	60.0	75	50.0
the school was far from home	14	7.1	4	6.0	8	9.5	2	4.0	12	8.0
the cost was reasonable	88	44.4	33	49.0	30	36.0	25	53.0	63	42.0
the teachers were well qualified	37	18.7	6	9.0	17	20.0	14	30.0	23	15.0
the programs were ones I wanted	153	77.3	45	67.0	74	88.0	34	72.0	119	79.0
the school was well respected	57	28.8	18	27.0	23	27.0	16	34.0	41	27.0

"The programs were the ones I wanted" was the greatest reason for choosing a particular school followed by "the school was close to home" and the "cost was reasonable".

When split by post-high school (no application and application) and adult the three main factors were the same in importance. "No application" post-high school respondents were particularly concerned about getting the programs they wanted (88%) thus many went to other VT schools. They were somewhat less concerned about cost or closeness. Adults (many married) had a high concern for cost (53%) and for closeness of the school (60% to post-high school (50%).

Adults were more concerned about teachers (30%) than post-high school (15%). Smallness of school was liked by many but less important to "no application" post-high school respondents (13%).

14. How much did you expect your VT training to help you with a job? (193)

	TOTAL		PHS APPL. 67		PHS NO APPL. 82		PHS 149		ADULT 44	
Very Helpful	127	65.8%	34	51.0%	65	79.0%	99	66.0%	28	64.0%
Somewhat Helpful	43	22.3	22	33.0	11	13.0	33	22.0	10	23.0
No Help At All	0		0		0		0		0	
I Did Not Know	23	11.9	11	16.0	16	7.0	17	11.0	6	14.0

Most respondents felt vocational school would help them in some way. None felt it would be no help at all. "No application" post-high school respondents were the most optimistic about the help it would give them, 79%.

Item 15 revealed several major reasons respondents did not attend Southwest Wisconsin Vocational-Technical Institute.

Major reasons were: could not decide to attend, postponed plans to a future year, needed money to support self or family, and found a permanent job.

Secondary reasons were: I lacked financial aid, was accepted at another school, programs offered at local VT school were not what I wanted, transportation, and other (which included diverse reasons such as: getting married, farming, attending college, non-local VT, didn't know what I wanted).

Minor reasons ranged from 1% to 5 1%. Housing was the greatest problem among these reasons followed by lack of information, 4.6%, and could not find a part-time job, 4.6%.

Reasons reflected the importance of either working and making money or of going to another school to get programs or other advantages wanted by the respondents.

Native Americans were so few that it was difficult to determine if "lack of financial aids" was an acute problem for them. Two of the six did mark it. Almost 14% of Caucasians had marked "lacked financial aids".

Survey Item 15 - Reasons for not Attending

Reason	Number	% of 198
1. Could not decide to attend	41	20.7
2. Postponed plans to future year	44	22.2
3. Could not see need for more training	5	2.5
4. Planned on entering military service	4	2.0
5. Needed to earn money to support myself or family	40	20.2
6. Found a permanent job	47	23.7
7. Could not find a part-time job that fit around school time	9	4.6
8. Lacked financial aids	29	14.7
9. Was accepted at another school	26	13.1
10. Credits from vocational technical school were not transferable	2	1.0
11. Space was not available in program I wanted	7	3.5
12. Programs offered at local VT school were not what I wanted	32	16.2
13. Admission requirements were too hard to complete	4	2.0
14. Did not want to take tests for admission	0	0
15. Was not accepted	2	1.0
16. Vocational-technical school did not have enough status	0	0
17. Transportation was a problem	23	11.6
18. Housing arrangements did not work out	10	5.1
19. Did not have enough information about the VT school	9	4.6
20. Did not wish to move out of the area for a job	5	2.5
21- A handicap prevented me from attending	3	1.5
22. Friends did not attend	6	3.0
23. Would have felt out of place in program because of sex	0	0
24. Felt older or younger than others in my class	2	1.0
25. Other	28	14.1

BREAKDOWN OF ITEM 15 BY POST-HIGH SCHOOL & ADULT GROUPS, MALES & FEMALES, MARITAL STATUS,. VETERAN STATUS, & RACIAL BACKGROUND

(By Percent of Column)

CHART TWO

	Percent of 198	Post-High School Application	Post-High School No Application	Post-High School	Adult	Male	Male - Married	Married - Single	Female	Female - Married	Female - Single	Veteran	Non Veteran	Native American	Caucasian
Could not decide to attend at the time	21	31	13	21	19	26	13	28	16	15	16.5	X	22	17	21
Postponed my plans to a future year	22	23	11	18.5	31	33	53	28	12	15	10.6	46	21	17	23
Could not see the need for more training	2.5	6	X	3	2	2	X	3	3	X	3.5	8	2	X	2.6
Planned on entering military service	2	4.5	X	2	2	4	X	5	X	X	X	X	2	17	1.6
Needed to earn money to support self or family	20	22	13	17	30	27	47	23	14	15	12	31	20	50	20
Found a permanent job	24	34	12	22	30	31	47	28	17	31	14	23	24	17	24
Could not find a part-time job	4.6	3	3.6	5	8.5	6	7	5	3	X	3.5	15.4	4	17	4
Lacked financial aids	15	9	9.5	9	32	19	33	15	10	8	9	23	14	33	14
Was accepted at another school	13	22	11	16	4	11.5	7	13	15	15	15	X	14	X	13
Credits from VT school were not transferable	1	1.5	X	.7	2	1	X	1	1	X	1	X	1	X	1
Space was not available in program I wanted	3.5	4.5	2.4	3	4	4	X	5	3	X	2.4	8	3.6	17	3
Programs offered at local VT school not what I wanted	16	9	29	20	4.3	12.5	7	11.5	20	X	23.5	8	17	X	17
Admission requirements were too hard to complete	2	4.5	X	2	2	3	7	2.6	1	X	1	8	1.6	X	2
Was not accepted	1	1.5	X	.7	2	X	X	X	2	X	1	X	1	17	.5
Transportation was a problem	11.6	13	7	10	17	12.5	13	11.5	11	23	9.4	23	10	17	12
Housing arrangements did not work out	5	1.5	6	4	8.5	6	7	6.4	4	X	5	8	4	17	5
Did not have enough information about VT school	4.6	4.5	3.6	4	6.4	4	X	4	5	X	6	X	5	X	5
Did not wish to move for job after completing school	2.5	4.5	1	3	2	5	X	6.4	X	X	X	X	3	X	2.6
Handicap prevented me from attending	1.5	1.5	1	1	2	2	X	1	1	X	1	X	1.6	X	1.6
Friends did not attend	3	4.5	24	3	2	3	X	4	3	X	3.5	X	3	X	3
Felt older or younger than others in my class	1	X	1	.7	2	2	X	1	X	X	X	X	1	X	1
Other	14	12	13	13	19	13.5	7	14	15	38.5	12	15.4	14	15	14

CHART II - This chart breaks Item 15 by post-high school and adult groups, males and females, marital status, veteran status and racial background.

When split by post-high school "application" and "no application" and by adult, major reasons shift somewhat for these groups although the four top reasons from totals are still important. The "no application" post-high school respondents were lower on all four major reasons: "could not decide to attend" (13%), "postponed plans to future" (11%), "needed to earn money" (13%) and "found a permanent job" (12%). These respondents were mainly intent on attending other schools. Post-high school "application" respondents were high on these items especially "could not decide" (31%), and "found a job" (34%). They were less decisive about plans and were more concerned with money. Other important reasons for the post-high group were "programs offered at local VT were not what I wanted" (20%). (This was important to 29% of "no application" post-high school who mainly went to non-local VT schools or college.) Only 9% of "application" post-high school marked this. Twenty-two percent of post-high school "application" respondents marked "accepted at another school" compared to "no application" (11%).

Among adults three of the four major reasons of the total were most important to them plus one different one. Postponed plans was a reason for 34%; needed to earn money for self or family, 30%; found a permanent job, 30%; and lack of financial aids, 32% (9% post-high school). Only 19% could not decide to attend and 19% marked "other." Aid and needed money to support self or family turned adult respondents to obtaining jobs. Adults were not so worried about programs being what they wanted.

Transportation was also a high item for adults (17%) while only 10% of post-high school had problems. This may relate to lack of aid, and for those that were married, the difficulty of getting to school if there is only one car. Housing was a problem for 8.5% of the adults compared to 4% of post-high school, and information was a somewhat greater problem for adults, 6.4%, than post-high school 4%.

Males and females varied in their reasons for not attending. Males were high on four major reasons of total respondents plus "lack of aid". Reasons given by females were more spread out. The sexes also varied by marital status.

Major reasons for males were: could not decide to attend, 26% (this item was high for singles, 28%, but less so for married men); "postponed plans" 33%; "needed money to support self or family" 27%; and "found a permanent job", 31%. All of these last three were of more concern to married males than single males by nearly twice as much. Nineteen percent marked "lacked financial aid" (33% of married males but only 15% of single males).

Major reasons for females were similar but not in such high percentages: "could not decide to attend", 16%; "found a permanent job", 17%; "needed money to support self or family," 14%; and "postponed plans" (15%) more than single women (10.6%). Married women were much higher on "found a permanent job" (31%) to singles (14%). Only 10% of females marked "lack of aid" as a problem. Fifteen percent of females and 13.5% of males gave "other" as a reason. Among reasons were going to a VT school, getting married, got a job, didn't know what I wanted. "Other" was marked by 38.5% of married women.

Three other items are of interest. "Programs at local VT were not what I wanted" was marked by 20% of female respondents and "was accepted at another school" was marked by 15% of female respondents. On both items only singles marked it. Of males 12.5% and 11.5% marked these (almost all single).

Transportation is of special interest because it is a problem for 23% of married females and to a lesser degree for married males, 13%. Singles of both sexes had some trouble.

None of the married females marked any of the remaining items and married males only marked two of them (housing, 7%, and admission requirements, 7%). The rest were problems for single people only. Of singles 5% males were entering military, around 5 to 6% of all singles had housing problems, and 6% of single females and 3% of single males did not have information. Many of these singles were in the adult group.

There were only 13 veterans who responded. Most of these were concerned with jobs. Many had "postponed plans" (46%), "found jobs" (23%), "needed money to support self or family" (31%), "lacked aid" (23%), or had "transportation problems" (23%). On all these items veterans were higher than non-veterans.

Figures for Native Americans and Caucasian cannot be considered valid for the Native American group because only 6 responded. All Native Americans held different reasons but three did mark "needed money to support self or family and two marked "lacked financial aids".

16. If "finding a permanent job" was a reason, for not attending (118)

Money was good	10	8.5%
Temporary job became permanent	37	31.4
Found job I liked	33	28.0
Work did not fit around school	25	21.2
Other	13	11.0

17. If "lacked financial aids" was a reason, for not attending (69)

Not enough available	8	11.6%
None available to me	14	20.3
Did not know if any was available	8	11.6
Aid came too late	3	4.4
Aid was uncertain	18	26.1
Confidential forms too much information	3	4.4
Aids I expected did not come through	5	7.3
Other	10	14.5

18. "Programs offered at my local VT school were not what I wanted" was a reason. Why? (55)

Program was too long	1	1.8%
Job opportunities limited	11	20.0
Started too late	1	1.8
Started too early	6	10.9
Had to wait too long to get into program	5	9.1
Program not offered	14	25.5
Did not like grading system	0	
Lack of student activities	0	
Other	17	30.9

19. If "not having enough information about the VT school" was a reason. Why? (31)

Needed to know the requirements for admission	5	16.1%
Needed to know actual cost	7	22.6
High school counselor did not give me the information I needed	3	9.7
Needed information about programs outside my local district	3	9.7
Not sure district would pay out of district tuition	5	16.1
Did not know how to get information	8	25.8

Items 16-19 further explain certain reasons given in Item 15. Of those who marked "found a permanent job" most liked the job they had and preferred staying with it. Some remarks included wanting to be on own, enjoyed job, wanted work experience, or could not schedule job around school.

Of those who marked "lacked financial aids" one-fourth felt none was available or that it was too uncertain to take a chance on school. Some comments mentioned problems with the VA and that the aid that was received was not enough.

Of those who marked "programs offered at my local VT school were not what I wanted", one-fourth said the program was notoffered and one-fifth said job opportunities were too limited. Some had scheduling problems in which the course started too early or too late. Comments mostly reiterated courses were not what they wanted.

Of those who marked "did not have enough information on VT school," 23% wanted to know actual cost and 26% did not know how to get the information. Adult singles who had applied had the most trouble.

20. Which persons helped you to decide not to attend a VT school? (188)

self	107	56.9%
parents and relatives	20	10.6
high school counselor	6	3.2
high school teacher	2	1.1
VT school staff	2	1.1
WIN or CETA counselor	1	.5
Rehab counselor	1	.5
VET counselor	3	1.6
Husband or wife	8	4.3
friends	19	10.1
other	19	10.1

Most respondents felt themselves responsible for the decision not to attend. The other items received small responses.

21. Do you think you might attend a VT school in the future? (166)

Yes	82	49.4%
Uncertain	57	34.3
No	27	16.3

If yes, reasons why (198)

If I wanted a different job	30	15.1%
If I needed further training for my present job	34	17.2
If I want to earn more	30	15.1
If I want to better myself	63	31.8
If I want to meet new people	24	12.1

About 84% were positive in attitude about attending in the future. The no's came mainly from those attending college or other VT schools. One-third would attend to better themselves. The rest of the reasons were quite evenly distributed.

CONCLUSIONS - BARRIERS TO ENROLLMENT AT SOUTHWEST WISCONSIN VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL INSTITUTE

Attitude among survey respondents was generally positive toward vocational, technical schools. Most respondents felt that the VT school would be of help to them and none felt it would be of no help.

Respondents chose a school, first, on the basis of it having the programs they wanted; second, that the school was close; and third, that the cost was reasonable. Most respondents took the responsibility themselves for the decision not to attend.

Distance was a factor as a barrier to enrollment. By county and last high school attended, more respondents decided not to attend than do attend from fringe areas of the district. This distance factor is tempered by the attitude of the local high school toward vocational school, the local town's socio-economic situation reflecting class attitudes toward more schooling, and the influence of nearby post-secondary schools. Desire for a close school among most applicants supports the distance factor.

Female respondents attending other schools are an exception.

Program choice was a barrier to enrollment. Rural schools are somewhat more limited in programs by the population base. Four-fifths of those attending other VT schools were females (mainly single) who were not attracted to southwest Wisconsin's male oriented programs. Most went to other adjoining VT schools. Aside from not having a great many traditional female programs, females were not encouraged or did not desire to enter non-traditional programs that were offered in the Southwest District. Separate social roles are still very much in existence discouraging a better balance of males and females in programs.

Non-white respondents in the Southwest District were so few that valid conclusions cannot be made.

On the whole job security, need for money, career indecisiveness, and program difficulties are indicated as the main barriers to enrollment at VT schools.

Jobs received top priority rather than deciding on a course of action through school. Males (on the whole somewhat older) sought jobs most feeling the burden of financial support particularly among married males. Female respondents also sought jobs but at a lesser rate because on the whole they were younger and more apt to be going to school.

The adult married person was less mobile and felt job obligations more acutely. Money was a greater problem for them along with scheduling and child care. Deciding to attend was a problem for married respondents because of these reasons. Also the school atmosphere is geared to the young and single. Aid was definitely needed.

Over age 25, respondents were few, because adults apply less to VT schools. The 19-24 year age group was the least stable. Many of the non-diploma respondents were in this group. Far too many do not attend that wish to. Goals, personal situations and job priorities are changing.

More of the unemployed or job seeking groups tended to have no diploma than employed groups indicating greater difficulty in finding satisfactory work without a diploma. But on the whole there was little difference between the non-attending and attending student according to type of diploma or highest grade completed. Fewer females dropped from high school which matches other research figures. Dropout figures for the post-high school group is probably erroneous because a disproportionate number of them were already seniors.

The adult respondents were more job concerned while post-high school respondents especially "non-applicants" were more concerned with programs in other schools. Most of the "no application" group were single and just out of high school, and therefore, more mobile. These people were more optimistic about how school could help them and were more intent on going. They were not as indecisive or worried about money.

The post-high school "application" respondents were more concerned about aid and money. They wanted programs that were of interest to them but were less mobile rating closeness of the school and cost as important factors. Many of the post-high school respondents combined, or wanted to combine, part-time, jobs with school. The post-high school "application" group was also influenced more strongly by friends attending and did not want to leave the area. This group was less decisive. Some gave up and joined the military or decided there was not need for training. Many of post-high school respondents were interested in enjoying life for a while and gaining outside experience.

Married respondents needed financial aid more and attended less than single respondents. They felt responsibilities more heavily.

Respondents in college had generally applied several places and were accepted elsewhere, and if they were worried about VT credits transferring, chose college as a safer bet.

Males were more worried about money and financial responsibilities than females. If married they felt the greater burden of support and postponed plans for jobs. They were less decisive overall about attending school. Being somewhat older they may have put less faith in school.

Females were also concerned about money, mainly among the married, but less so than males. Lack of aid was not marked as often by females probably because many were young and going to non-local VT schools with the aid of their parents. Females were not as indecisive in their reasons for not attending. Lack of programs desired was a major reason.

Veterans were a large part of adult respondents and increased age of males. Not many veterans did not attend in comparison with those who did probably because of veterans benefits. Most were not motivated by school and preferred jobs. They were not indecisive in their reasons.

Aid, scheduling, information, and transportation were all barriers as well to enrollment. Many respondents wanted but could not get jobs to fit around school. Schedules could have been more flexible. Aid was a problem for married people who were more apt to get jobs which promised more security than the uncertainty of aid. Cost was often unclear to respondents which influenced them not to attend. Catalog descriptions may have been vague also. Single adult respondents indicated the least access to information and had a high number of high school dropouts.

Transportation was a greater problem for adults who were married especially women and veterans. Adults are more likely to want to live home and commute. Lack of aid and schedule problems seemed to relate to this item.

On the whole, preference for jobs over school is the result of undefined goals, lack of motivation, uncertainty of aids, and family responsibilities. Programs at other VT schools also drew a large number of respondents and distance was a factor.

RECOMMENDATIONS - BARRIERS TO ENROLLMENT

Some things this survey could have included that would have been beneficial to the study:

1. Survey should have included a question on child care as a problem for parents who are would-be students.

2. Survey should have included a question on health of potential student or family member as a reason for not attending.

More study should be given to gathering information on parents' occupations, education, and size of family, as they relate to job aspirations. Information is needed on outside socio-economic influences. Also, how many respondents had reading or math problems? The high school can be used as a source if possible.

ADULT AND/OR MARRIED STUDENTS

Many adults need new job skills. Southwest Tech could be geared to their needs as well which includes offering full-time classes on a part-time basis. The school should also become less high schoolish in its procedure. (High school atmosphere is resented by students according to the data.)

Adults might prefer other types of social activities. Homemakers in particular and others are in need of child care information and aid. Is the school Parent Child Care Center well publicized? A list competent babysitters in the area might also be compiled.

Instructional schedules should be more flexible to accommodate those with other obligations (those with children or those who must work part-time).

The counseling of adult students could be given more time. Counselors may need more information on special problems of adults and married students (adjustment to school, schedules, child care, money and budget needs).

There should be evening courses in regular programs of if this is difficult for a smaller district and asking too much of teachers, perhaps other ways could be found such as workshops or short intensive courses.

MALES AND FEMALES

Apprenticeships are generally all-male. The school should actively and seriously encourage women to take apprenticeships.

Scholarships or grants should be offered to encourage males and females into non-traditional occupations.

Program make-up should be studied to induce them into a reasonable balance of male and female enrollment.

Attitudes of counselors and teachers should be studied regarding this subject.

MINORITIES

Better recruitment of Indians and blacks is needed. The attitude in communities especially in rural areas may be a problem. The possible isolation of minorities should be prevented. Information on the Institute should be better directed to minorities to assist in recruitment.

Handicapped people may not be getting full advantage of the school because of the difficulties in location and recruitment.

PROGRAMS

Southwest Tech may need broader program choice. If potential student population limits this, then are those program that are given offered on the broadest base available?

Women appear to be a neglected group in the district. Additional new programs should be examined periodically for need in the district.

Those students going to other schools may desire a program that has a job market in the local district but it is unavailable at the present.

Districts should cooperate more in information made available on programs from other districts.

There should be greater effort to improve existing programs by program review.

Students should be counseled into areas that interest them but also fit their abilities.

Revision of programs may be necessary if job opportunities are limited.

Are explanations of courses and programs in catalogs clear in objective and type of job that results. Vagueness may contribute to lack of motivation to actually enter a VT school.

Curriculum development should continuously be aware of the need for a program.

Consider expanding popular programs and staff to avoid long waiting lists, but not if jobs are not existent.

FINANCIAL AIDS

Uncertainty about aid may discourage potential students. Inform students of aid as quickly as possible.

Actual costs should be given when students choose a program. The data indicates misunderstanding about costs may discourage many applicants.

Potential students should be made aware of all aids that are available and the limitations on aid.

More aid should be available to those with families if possible.

INFORMATION

Requirements of courses should be clearly explained.

Keep in touch with applicants in the summertime.

Communities and newspapers should be utilized better to disseminate information on the schools especially to adults.

Many people are unaware of the kinds of skills they can learn that are offered very near to them according to the data.

Use community centers and libraries as well as high schools as attendance centers.

GOALS

High school graduates as well as non-diploma people sometimes need goal development. More emphasis on career exploration could be offered.

If jobs are considered more importance by respondents than training for a better job, goal orientation may help develop long-range thinking on a career rather than having money in the present. Unemployed people without high school diplomas are of special concern.

Counseling on goals closer to the time of registration. Consider making greater use of student preference interests, and evaluations, but continue to use realism when estimating abilities. Aspirations of some students may be too high or too low.

Making the decision about choice of program should be done by the potential student. This is especially important for people who tend to depend too much on others.

Consider expanding the services of a clinical psychologist.

PROCEDURES

The registration process should be more personal. Applications should be processed quickly and red tape minimized to maintain student interest.

HIGH SCHOOLS

VT schools should continue to develop better relations with high schools. They could provide additional job information and follow-ups that could help high schools better serve their students. Possibly consider a Student Services newsletter to be mailed to high schools.

Lists of rides for commuting students could be provided. Car pooling would be encouraged and transportation would be less of a problem. Bus routes and times also could be provided.

Housing lists could be expanded. These houses should meet certain standards and not be unreasonable in rent. VT school should continue to work with the community to provide adequate housing.

Recruitment and counseling of adults, married people, and minorities should become a larger part of procedure at VT schools.

Areas of greater distance in the district are of special concern for recruitment.

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